

Mr. Speaker, if we do nothing else this International Women's Day, I ask that we think about women in the Third World who have been abandoned by our contraceptive counseling policy, and I think we, at best, have an obligation to think seriously about how to make our way back to the inroads we were beginning to make.

RADIO FREE SPEECH IS BEING DENIED IN NEW YORK CITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, tyrants in control of totalitarian countries like China, Serbia and Iraq consider control of the airwaves an absolute necessity. They ruthlessly enforce censorship of a kind few of us can imagine in America.

Last Monday, however, I had the weird and frightening experience of being gagged by a radio station manager in my own home City of New York. It started with a routine request that I call in for a phone interview on a show hosted on Radio Station WBAI by Ken Nash which focuses on union and labor news and features.

The name of the show which commences at 2 p.m. was Building Bridges. As the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, I welcome the chance to appear on shows related to working families or unions.

It is important to note that Radio Station WBAI is a nonprofit station. It runs primarily on contributions solicited from its mass of diverse listeners. Since last December, this station has experienced considerable turmoil internally and long-term producers and hosts have been fired or locked out of the station.

Like many New Yorkers, I am concerned about the present and future of this vital outlet for free speech on the radio. Without knowing all of the specific tensions and confrontations within the station, I have indicated my interests in working towards the resolution of the problems hampering the continuation of the unique and robust programming of WBAI.

It is important to note that I am presently seeking ways to get more avenues opened for radio free speech in my city in general.

Five low-powered Haitian stations have been shut down. The survival of WBAI is vital for the entire movement seeking more access to the airwaves. The bully monopolies of commercial radio provide the continuing roadblocks to these stations. My knowledge of the reputation of certain recent appointments to the board of Pacifica Network, which is the parent nonprofit institution responsible for WBAI, leads me to conclude that there is a clear and immediate danger that attempts will be made to sell WBAI to a commercial owner. Such a sale would mean the loss of a vital voice for working families in New York City.

My beliefs and point of view are considered heresy by Station Manager Utrice Leid. Without explanation or apology, she shut down the microphones and proclaimed that she had to intervene because it was her job to allow only the truth over the airwaves.

The following is a summary of the statement I would have made had I not been censored and shut off:

The situation at WBAI has implications far beyond this one station. Freedom of speech over the airwaves via radio, broadcast television and cable television is presently quite limited for the majority of Americans, and they are not aware of this. We have a problem of great magnitude that is not being appropriately addressed. The WBAI arrangement and structure offered one model to be emulated. As a listener supported station with a very diverse set of programs, procedures and guests, WBAI represents the optimum use of radio in the service of ordinary people.

When I attended the memorial service of the late Samori Marksman, who is a former WBAI station manager, last year in the great hall of St. John's Cathedral, I saw at that funeral a more diverse assembly than I have seen anywhere in New York City. Folks from all races, religions, income levels, and political persuasions were there. There were intellectual snobs who support programs broadcasting esoteric operas mingling with radical, grassroots political activists. Indeed, as a politician, one immediate reaction I experienced as I contemplated all of the diversity and the solidarity was at that funeral I felt that some of the powerful people in powerful places would see WBAI as a threat and seek to destroy it.

Mr. Speaker, WBAI represents radio freedom of speech that does not make profit for anyone. There are those who see profits being made via WBAI and other Pacifica stations. There are others in powerful stations who feel that only commercial stations should exist; or if there are public stations, they should be indirectly controlled by corporate grants and benign corporate advertisements.

Some of the persons who have recently been appointed to the Pacifica Board represent such powerful commercial interests and, in my opinion, WBAI is an endangered station as long as such business predators are on the Pacifica Board. Persons far removed from the original ideals and philosophy of the founders of the Pacifica chain are not likely to promote the original intent of this very well conceived system.

The basic question which must be tested as soon as possible in the courts is who owns a nonprofit entity? Who has a right to sell a nonprofit radio station? Does the original charter or licensing by the FCC permit any group of trustees or directors to treat Pacifica and WBAI as if they were commercial entities?

While the Pacifica turmoil is raging, I strongly urge WBAI to seek to pre-

serve its freedom by exploring the necessary steps to become independent of Pacifica. As a nonprofit entity, WBAI should use the university structure as a model. It should elect the board of trustees through a voting process utilizing its contributors and supporters as the voters. The trustees should be responsible for basic business operations while the producers and staff should be given a role similar to the faculty of a university. Basic freedom similar to academic freedom and tenure should be conferred upon the long-standing producers and long-term paid and unpaid staff participants.

We want to preserve WBAI in New York City.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, as the cochair of the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues, I am proud to rise today to acknowledge International Women's Day.

This day is a symbolic recognition of the great contributions that women around the world make everyday in society as mothers, teachers, farmers, doctors, maids, engineers, accountants, social workers, lawyers and activists. It is also a time to review the progress of women in the public arena and the workplace, as well as their struggle for equal status and full participation in society, justice and peace.

International Women's Day is celebrated in the United States, United Nations and in many countries throughout the world. International Women's Day was declared in August 1910 at a meeting in Copenhagen. The Women's Socialist International Organization decided to commemorate March 8 as Women's International Day due to the strikes by hundreds of women workers in garment and textile factories in New York. The strike was against low wages, 12-hour workdays and inhumane working conditions.

In 1975, during International Women's Year, the United Nations began celebrating March 8 as International Women's Day. Two years later, in December 1977, the General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace to be observed on a date to be chosen by each Member State.

Women around the world have assumed positions of influence in all sectors of society, Mr. Speaker, and also have contributed to economic and social advancement. Yet, women face discrimination in many areas of society, and violence against women is part of everyday life for many.

Women constitute the majority of the world's poor. Eighty percent of all refugees are women. One in every three women have been beaten or abused in some way.

□ 1845

Two million young girls are introduced into the commercial sex market each year. 130 million girls have undergone female genital mutilation. Every year 5,000 women and girls are victims of the so-called "honor killings." Four million women and girls are bought and sold worldwide, either into prostitution, marriage or slavery. Two-thirds of the 300 million children worldwide without access to education are girls.

In Africa, HIV-positive women now outnumber infected men by 2 million. In India, it is estimated that more than 5,000 women are killed each year because their dowries are not enough. Women are still underrepresented in governments and political parties.

Despite slow progress in some areas, the advances that have been made in the status of women in society must not be underestimated. Female genital mutilation has been outlawed in several African countries. Many Latin American countries have modified legislation to improve women's access to resources, education and health services. Several countries have adopted or amended their constitutions to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex. Bermuda, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, South Africa and Venezuela adopted various forms of domestic violence legislation. Chile, Cyprus, the Sudan, and Zambia outlawed discrimination on the basis of pregnancy or childbirth. Egyptian women gained divorce rights similar to men's.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the gains that women have made internationally and to acknowledge that we still have much to do in the struggle for equity and justice.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ESHOO addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ALLEN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise tonight to participate in a discussion with my Democratic colleagues on the subject of special education. All of us have been traveling through our

districts talking to teachers and parents and students and school administrators, and we have found over and over again that the number one concern is the failure of the Federal Government to live up to its responsibility to pay the full 40 percent of the special education costs that were mandated by the Federal Government 26 years ago.

But we need to set this debate about special education in context, and particularly in the context of the debate over taxes we had here today. For all of the sound and fury of the debate this afternoon, the differences were fairly simple. On the one hand the Republicans were advocating for an important part of what is an overall \$1.6 trillion tax cut over the next 10 years. \$1.6 trillion.

On the other hand, the Democrats were arguing for a corresponding part of what overall would be an \$800 billion tax decrease over 10 years, half the size of the Republican tax cut.

Now, the reason the debate was so intense and the reason Members on the Democratic side of the aisle felt so strongly about this subject is that the numbers were not being put forth accurately.

For example, if we are going to give back either \$800 billion as the Democrats proposed in terms of tax cuts or \$1.6 trillion in tax cuts as the Republicans proposed, those are not the amounts by which the debt is reduced because if you have a substantial tax cut, then that money is not available to pay down the Federal debt and, therefore, interest on the Federal debt would be higher than it would be otherwise.

On the Republican side, that \$1.6 trillion tax cut, if enacted as passed by the House today, means that we will have over 10 years \$400 billion of interest that we have to pay on the national debt that we would not have to pay if that tax cut were not enacted. On the Democratic side the corresponding number is about \$100 billion to \$150 billion extra in interest that we will have to pay, and what is true for tax cuts is true for spending.

Here is the fundamental problem. If you set aside the Social Security trust fund and the Medicare trust fund, the Bush tax cut, \$1.6 trillion in tax cuts plus \$400 billion in additional interest on the national debt plus \$300 billion in order to fix the alternative minimum tax, very quickly you find that the Bush tax cut reduces the surplus by about \$2.4 trillion to \$2.5 trillion.

If that tax cut passes the other body in the form that it passed here today, we are in trouble as a country because that tax cut slams the door on any effort to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit for our seniors any time in the next 10 years if current projections hold. That tax cut, the Republican tax cut, slams the door on the use of general revenues at any time in the next 10 years to shore up Medicare and Social Security and extend the life of those two vital programs.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the program that we are here to talk about tonight, the Republican tax cut slams the door on any ability to fully fund special education.

I know we have a number of Members on our side wanting to speak, but just to lay this in context and say it simply, right now in the year in which we are in, we spent \$6.3 billion on special education. The mandate that we required the States to meet 26 years ago to provide a free and appropriate education for children with disabilities, and when we said 26 years ago that the Federal Government would meet 40 percent of the cost of that program, we do not even come close. This year \$6.3 billion represents just under 15 percent of the total cost of special education in this country. That is a long way from the 40 percent that this Congress talked about when the mandate was imposed.

In our districts, teachers, school administrators, parents, and even students understand that there is not enough money for special education, that local funds are being drained out of regular education programs in order to pay for special education, and that the local property taxpayers are taking a hit. We can help all of these groups if we would simply step up to the plate this year, reduce the tax cut and fully fund special education.

The last thing I will say is this. If we do not do it this year, it is not likely to happen any time in the next 10 years. The reason is that full funding is an extra \$11 billion. We do not run surpluses most years. It has taken a hard climb to get to them, and now we have the opportunity to use some portion of this Federal surplus to meet the Federal Government's obligations. This is not a new program. It is simply doing what we are obligated to do, what we ought to do for our children and for our school districts, our parents and teachers around the country.

Mr. Speaker, I am joined tonight by a number of Members, and it is a particular pleasure to recognize the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) who helped organize this special order tonight.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague from Maine, and I thank you for yielding.

The gentleman from Maine set the stage very well. What happened on the floor here just a matter of a couple of hours ago was really putting the cart before the horse. There are certainly justifiable tax cuts. I know that my constituents back in New Jersey are only too eager, as the President says, to get a refund on overpayments. The President came here and said in the joint session when he gave what would be called a State of the Union address that he was asking for a refund. But the reason this was the cart before the horse is because it is hard to know what the amount of overpayment is because we have no budget proposal that comes in advance of this tax cut vote.